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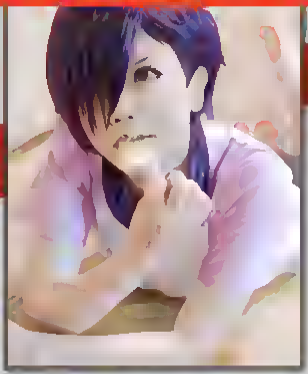

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54 TEAM MASTER LORD

쏴아아아
크릉
콰
르

YO~

NOW AREN'T THESE SOME FACES I'VE LONGED TO SEE~
NICE TO MEET YOU.
SIFORD

YOU DID WELL, NIKKI.
IT'S RAINING MAD OUTSIDE BLOODY HELL

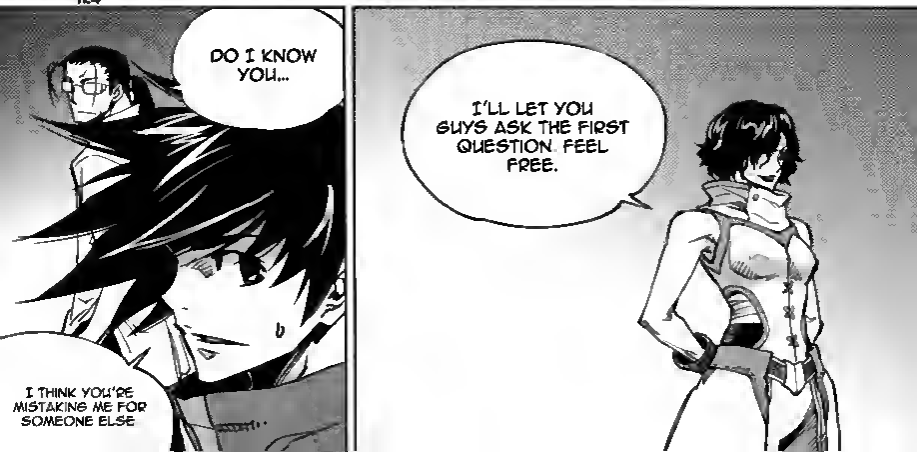
SO I SEE YOU ALL MANAGED TO CLING ONTO YOUR LIVES.

PROFESSOR VIDITCH?
WHAT PROFESSOR...
!
GOOD TO SEE YOU'RE ALL SAFE.

I AM LORD VIDITCH'S DISCIPLE LLOYD.
I'M WHITE.

YES. SO THIS CHILD IS MELROSE...
HE LOOKS LIKE A TYPICAL MAGE HATCHLING.
123
HE LOOKS MORE LIVELY THAN I IMAGINED? LOOKS LIKE WE CAN CUT TO THE CHASE

ONE OF THESE DAYS I'LL HAVE TO THANK ZAPPA IN PERSON.
I DIDN'T THINK I'D END UP MEETING WALKING MYTHS THROUGH THIS JOURNEY.
AND..


DO I KNOW YOU...
I THINK YOU'RE MISTAKING ME FOR SOMEONE ELSE
I'LL LET YOU GUYS ASK THE FIRST QUESTION. FEEL FREE.

WHAT DO YOU WANT. WHY DID THE THIEVES GUILD JOIN THE FRAY?
LET ME MAKE THIS SIMPLE. WHERE DOES POWER COME FROM.
RIGHT? WHY WOULD WE INVOLVE OURSELVES IN THIS.
125
JUST A SHORT WHILE AGO, IT WAS THE GUILD OF MAGI THAT HELD ABSOLUTE POWER. AND POWER COMES WITH MONEY.
AND MONEY FURTHER STRENGTHENS POWER.

THE AMOUNT OF GOLD THEY WERE SPENDING WAS BEYOND ANYONE'S IMAGINATION.
THEY USED GOLD AND JEWELS THAT EVEN NOBLES WOULD FIND DIFFICULT TO OBTAIN AS THOUGH IT WAS WATER.
THEY HAD AN ABUNDANCE OF GOLD AND AN INSATIABLE DESIRE TO SPEND IT. YOU CAN SAY THEY WERE THE ULTIMATE CUSTOMERS.
EHEM...

THE ONES WHO PROVIDED THE GUILD OF MAGI WITH SERVICES THE MOST WASN'T THE MECHANT GUILD BUT THE THIEVES GUILD.
OF COURSE THIS WAS ONLY POSSIBLE BECAUSE WE DIDN'T MIND USING ANY MEANS NECESSARY TO CARRY OUT OUR MISSIONS.

AND BECAUSE OF THAT NOWADAYS YOU GUYS ARE BEING LEFT BEHIND BY THE MERCHANT GUILDS.
IN FACT THE ONES WHO HAS NO PLACE IN THIS SICKENINGLY PEACEFUL WORLD ARE YOU LOTS.
WELL, THAT'S SOMEWHAT TRUE, MUSICIAN.
127
WE NEEDED TO FIND WAYS TO MOVE FORWARD WITH THE TIMES.
SO DO WE DEVELOP A NEW DIFFICULT ROUTE FOR US. OR..
SHOULD WE FIND WAYS TO BRING OUR OLD FRIENDS BACK INTO POWER.

FRIENDS? JUST A SHORT WHILE AGO YOU PEOPLE WERE THE ONES CUTTING DOWN THOSE YOU CALLED FRIENDS.
HEY KIDS FIGHT ALL THE TIME RIGHT? THERE'S ALWAYS BOUND TO BE SMALL FIGHTS BETWEEN FRIENDS.
WE LOOK AT THE END RESULTS RATHER THAN THE PROCESS.

RIGHT NOW WE'RE ON THIS MISSION BECAUSE WE BELIEVE WHAT YOUR PAL HERE IS TRYING TO ACHIEVE WILL BECOME BENEFICIAL TO US. THAT'S ALL THERE IS TO IT.

WHEN THE MOTIVE BECOMES CLEAR OUR ACTIONS TO TAKE BECOMES CLEAR.
AND THAT'S HOW TENSE THE SITUATION HAS BECOME.
12
AND I MANAGED TO FIND ANOTHER UNUSUAL FACE I WAS LOOKING FOR SO IT'S NOT A BAD DEAL.

NOW THAT I TOOK A GOOD LOOK AT YOU UP CLOSE I THINK I MIGHT JUST GO CRAZY.
RELAX.
YOUR OPPONENT IS A MASTER LORD. YOU'LL DIE.

IT DOESN'T MATTER. THAT IS MY DUTY.

WHY ARE YOU COOPERATING WITH THEM MASTER VIDITCH
LET ME ASK ONE MORE TIME THEN.
I KNOW THAT YOU'VE CHOSEN A NEUTRAL STANCE BUT WHY HAVE YOU CHOSEN THEM OVER MEMENTO MORI.
I'M NOT RAISING ISSUES ABOUT ETHICS TO A MAGICIAN. SO WHY IS IT
WHY HAVE YOU CHOSEN TO ACT NOW.

HMM...
CHOSEN TO ACT NOW HUH...
YES. I SUPPOSE I'VE ACTED A BIT LATE.
BACK OFF WHELP, TRY GETTING TO MY AGE. SEE IF YOU GET THESE TIMINGS RIGHT.
I ERR DIDN'T MEAN THAT SIR.

IT'S NOT SOMETHING THAT MEMENTO MORI CAN ACHIEVE WITH THEIR ABILITIES. YOU'LL KNOW SOON ENOUGH.
I GUESS IT'S MY TURN TO ASK QUESTIONS. HEY BOY.
YES.

HAVE YOU THOUGHT OF HOW TO GET THERE.
I WAS GOING TO THINK OF SOMETHING WHEN I GOT CLOSE ENOUGH...
ARE YOU SHITTING ME. YOU THINK BY THINKING THE PALACE GATES WILL JUST MAGICALLY OPEN.
UM. I THOUGHT IT WOULD ALL SOMEHOW WORK OUT..
LET'S SAY YOU SOMEHOW HAD THE DEVILS LUCK AND WENT THROUGH THE PALACE GATES. HOW WILL YOU FIND ZAPPA.
I'M SURE YOU COULD FEEL IT. AN ENORMOUS AIR IS MOVING.
W, WELL THAT'S...
WHAT I'M SAYING IS THAT THE SITUATION HAS BECOME CRITICAL.

I'M SURE YOU ALL NEEDED SOME TIME... EVEN I TRIED TO LOOK FOR A GLIMMER OF HOPE IN THAT PLACE.
BUT I FEAR THAT WE NO LONGER HAVE THE LUXURY OF TIME TO DWELL ON OTHER POSSIBILITIES.

I DON'T KNOW IF THIS IS THE RIGHT THING TO DO, BUT...
I WILL BRING YOU TO HIM.

RIGHT NOW I MEAN.

THIS IS WHY I'VE JOINED HANDS WITH THE THIEVES GUILD.
THERE IS AN OLD GATE THE PALACE MAGES USED TO USE IN SECRECY.
WOULD IT HELP YOU UNDERSTAND IT IF I TOLD YOU THAT GATE NOW FALLS UNDER THE THIEVES GUILD'S TERRITORY.
IT FELL UNDER RUIN SINCE THE DARK AIR, BUT I GUESS IT'S CURRENTLY LOCKED AWAY.
AND ONLY I CAN UNLOCK IT. IT SHOULD BE POSSIBLE NOW.

I'LL SAY THIS AGAIN BUT WE DON'T HAVE ANY MOMENT TO LOSE.
THERE'S A MOUNTAIN OF QUESTIONS WE SHOULD ADDRESS BUT WE SIMPLY DON'T HAVE THE TIME.
I JUST HOPE THERES A HAPPY ENDING FOR THE AMOUNT OF TIME REMAINING IN ONES OLD LIFE...
...
SOUNDS LIKE YOU'RE TALKING ABOUT SOMEONE ELSE'S PROB-LEMS.
AREN'T YOU SHARP LAO.

THIS MIGHT BECOME THE LAST GATE YOU GO THROUGH. I'VE NO INTENTION ON FORCING YOU.

THAT'S ALL THE HELP THE THIEVES GUILD CAN OFFER. HOW ABOUT IT?
138
DECIDE.
I'LL GO.
I'VE ALREADY DECIDED THAT.

I'VE ALREADY DECIDED THAT.
NOT YOUR AVERAGE GEEK EH BOY.

IT'S UNFORTUNATE BUT YOU DON'T EVEN HAVE THE TIME TO NAP.
140
GET READY.
THERE'S NO WAY OF TELLING WHAT WILL HAPPEN AFTER ALL THIS.
WE'RE LEAVING NOW.

ARE YOU PLANNING ON GOING WITH THEM.

THERE'S SOMETHING I WANTED TO ASK.

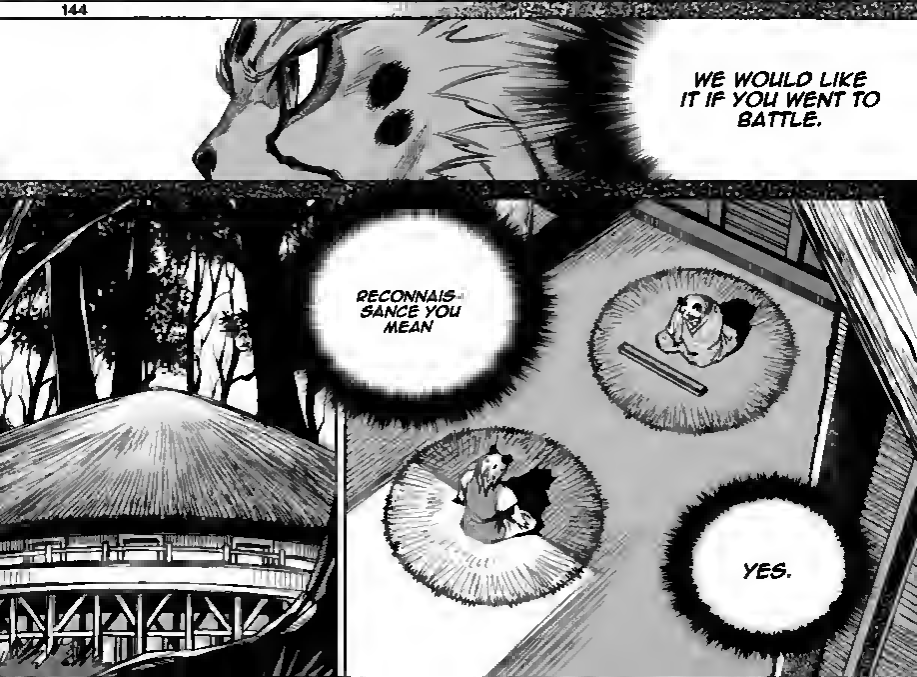
WHERE DOES THE FOREST CLANS STAND IN ALL THIS.

YOU'RE CURIOUS ABOUT US HERMITS.
WELL, I'M SIMILAR, LET'S PUT IT THAT WAY..
WE ALWAYS STAND AT NEUTRALITY.
BUT...
IT'S A DIFFERENT MATTER IF OUR NEUTRALITY IS SHAKEN.

I AM HERE ON THEIR BEHALF TO CHECK THE ORIGIN OF THAT THREAT.

HEHE. SO THE ULTIMATE TEAM WAS BORN.
THEN LET ME ASK FOR A FAVOR.
FIND OUT MORE ABOUT THIS THREAT IN MY PLACE.
BECAUSE IT LOOKS LIKE THIS ISN'T THE KIND OF STAGE WE CAN JOIN INTO.

THEN I WISH YOU LUCK FOREST CLAN'S WARRIOR.


WE WOULD LIKE IT IF YOU WENT TO BATTLE.
RECONNAIS-SANCE YOU MEAN
YES.

THE COUNCIL HAS REACHED A CONCLUSION.
IT SIMPLY MEANS THIS IS A VERY IMPORTANT MISSION.
THIS WILL SERVE AS YOUR LAST TEST AS MY SUCCESSOR.
IF YOU CAN'T DO IT THEN I TRUST NO ONE CAN.
PHEW... I DON'T KNOW IF THIS IS THE RIGHT THING TO IMPOSE ON YOU OR NOT.
I WILL GO AND PREPARE.

THEY DECIDED IT'LL BE YOU HON?
IT WAS ABOUT TIME THEY SENT ME.
YEAH BUT WHY NOW OF ALL TIMES!
YOU DON'T THINK I KNOW? YOU MIGHT NOT MAKE IT BACK ALIVE.

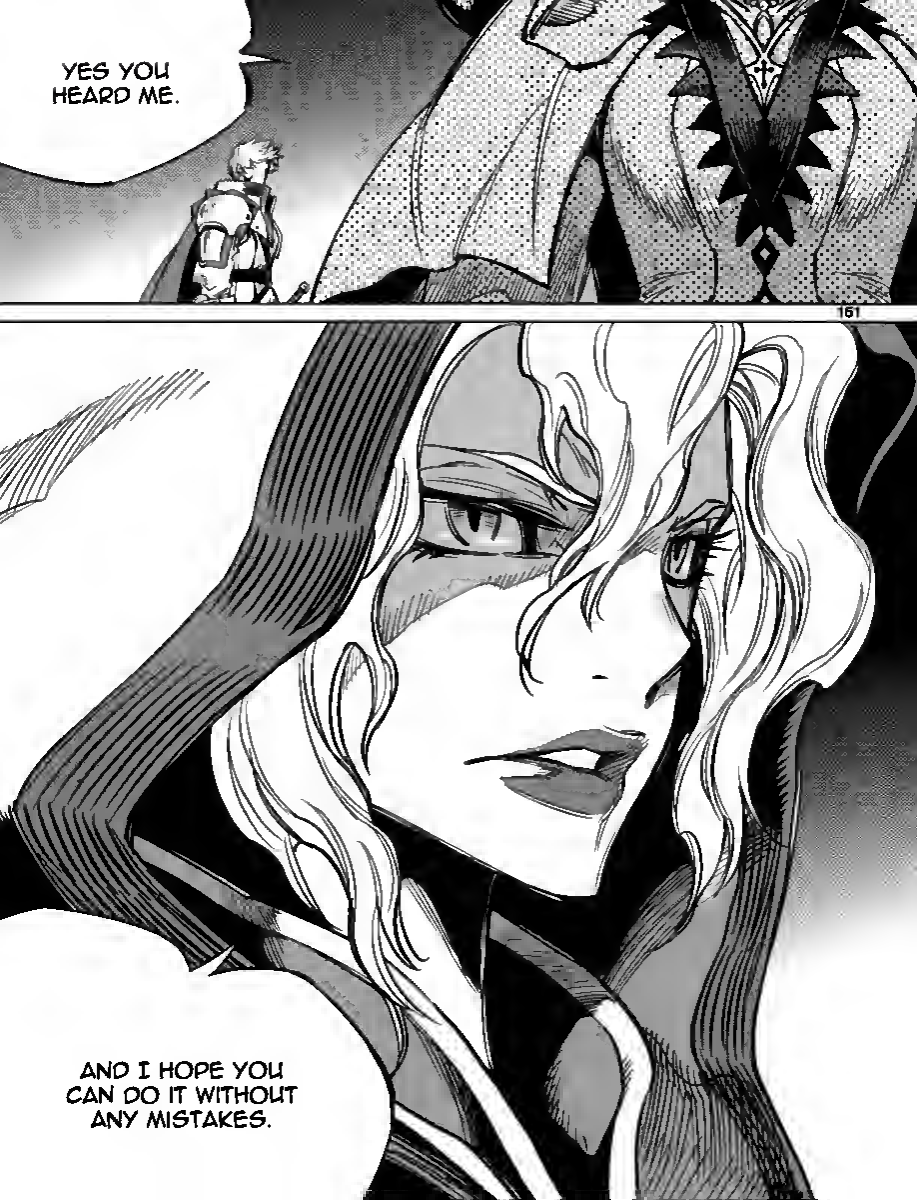
AND WHY DID IT HAVE TO BE YOU. IT WAS EITHER CHAPERS OR THE WINDWALKERS TURN TO SET OUT.
I SHOULD GO AND INFORM THEIR FAMILIES THEN.
THIS WAS THE DECISION OF THE COUNCIL. RYNIS.
PLEASE DON'T TELL ME TO ABANDON MY HONOR.
YOU DON'T HAVE TO WORRY.

AS ALWAYS, I WILL RETURN TO YOU.
HMM...
...IT'S COLD.

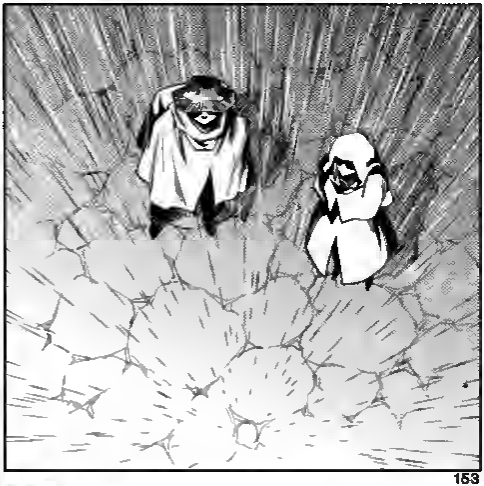
!
149
YOUR HIGHNESS!

WHAT'S GOING ON IN THERE.
HUH?!
LET'S TALK, COMMANDER.
WHAT DID YOU...

THEY'RE... TO BE IMPRISONED YOU SAY.


YES YOU HEARD ME.
151
AND I HOPE YOU CAN DO IT WITHOUT ANY MISTAKES.

INFORM ME AT ONCE UPON THEIR ARRIVAL.
152
YES. YOUR HIGHNESS.
DON'T TELL ANYONE.
YES..



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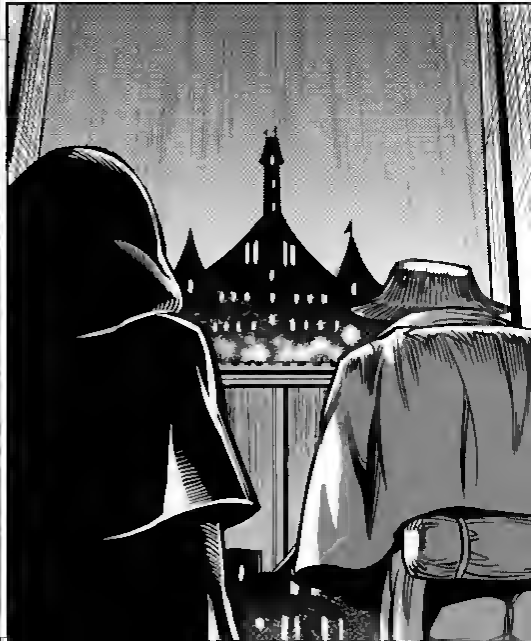

IT LOOKS LIKE IT'LL BEGIN ANY MINUTE.
ARE THEY TRULY...